

PRINCIPLE #6 (d): **RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER MÉTIS NATION COLLECTIVITIES, COMMUNITIES, OR GOVERNMENTS**

FAQs

Principle #6(d): Relationships with other Métis Nation Collectivities, Communities, or Governments

The Métis Communities in Ontario have chosen to come together to form the MNO—as their Métis government—while continuing to exercise and implement their rights to self-determination and self-government at the local and regional levels. In order to respect the self-determination and self-government rights of the Métis Communities in Ontario, the Constitution will provide for, among other things: . . .

(d) the ability of the Métis Communities in Ontario to enter into arrangements with other Métis Nation collectivities, communities, or governments bilaterally or through the MNO in order to facilitate or advance respectful relationships.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT FOR THIS PRINCIPLE

Since long before Canada became Canada, Indigenous Nations and communities have co-existed with their own governments, laws, languages, customs, and traditions.

Indigenous communities have always had relationships with one another and have, at times, entered into various agreements between themselves. While historically these agreements were often not written down but were recorded through ceremony and oral promises, they were no less binding and important for maintaining good relations than today's written agreements.

These agreements between Indigenous communities have dealt with subjects such as mutual recognition of each other's governance rights, relationship building commitments, or agreements about use of shared territories or lands, among others.

These historic Indigenous nation-to-nation or community-to-community agreements laid the foundation for many of the early treaties between Indigenous peoples and the Crown. They continue to be a useful way for Indigenous communities to maintain relationships with each other and with other Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments.

EXAMPLES FROM OTHER INDIGENOUS GOVERNMENTS

The Tlicho First Nation and a number of Dene First Nations entered into an [Agreement](#) about how they were going to work together to address their overlapping interests in specific lands. The agreement was clear that they were working together in a spirit of traditional respect, co-operation, and for mutual benefit. It set out the areas where the Tlicho First Nation would harvest, areas where the Dene First Nations would harvest, as well as a shared used area where they would consult each other about any management decisions.¹

The Māori communities of Aotearoa New Zealand came together and entered into a [Relationship Accord](#) with each other and the Government of New Zealand. The Accord outlines the overall vision of the relationship, which is to work together for a fair, inclusive, and flourishing society. While this example includes the Crown, it also has foundational principles recognizing the history and diversity of the communities and their contributions, including commitments to include diverse voices and enable communities to determine their own destinies, participate in and have their communities flourish.²

WHAT WE'RE DOING NOW / EXISTING MNO EXAMPLES

Notably, many of the MNO's Regional Implementation Agreements ("RIAs") already acknowledge that the rights-holding Métis communities represented by the MNO will want to have ongoing relationships with the Métis Nation, First Nations, or others. The RIAs recognize the importance of the future Constitution making space for these sort of arrangements, but do not outline any principles or requirements for how this could be done.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What important principles should be included in the Constitution to guide these arrangements?
 - For example: is "advancing respectful relationships" enough or should the Constitution be clear that arrangements should not be entered into with groups that deny Métis rights?
- Is it important that the Constitution confirm that these arrangements between individual Métis communities or with the Métis Nation cannot impact or bind the MNO or the other Métis communities the MNO represents?
- Should the Constitution require that the citizens of the Métis community be able to vote on whether to enter into an arrangement with another Métis community or with the Métis Nation?
- Should there be a clear process for how the MNO and Métis community can address any concerns with an arrangement that does not follow these requirements?

¹A copy of the Tlicho-Dene Agreement is available at:
<https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/38-1/AANO/related-document/1520120>.

²A copy of the Maori Relationship Accord is available at:
[https://www.dia.govt.nz/vwluResources/The%20Kia%20Tutahi%20Relationship%20Accord/\\$file/Kia_Tutahi_Standing_Together_Accord.pdf](https://www.dia.govt.nz/vwluResources/The%20Kia%20Tutahi%20Relationship%20Accord/$file/Kia_Tutahi_Standing_Together_Accord.pdf).